

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

(Competitive Class)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

This class encompasses a responsible administrative position in the police department, the primary duties of which include providing the news media with information on crimes, accidents, or any police department activities that are newsworthy and assisting the Chief of Police in handling any special projects that will involve the public or the news media. Duties of this class require the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Because the nature of the work requires that the incumbent have access to police department intelligence files and have knowledge of police operations and internal matters, the exercise of mature, independent judgement is required. The Public Information Officer is required to be on duty or subject to call at all times and is accountable directly to the Chief of Police.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

Examples listed below are illustrative only. They are not intended to include all duties which may be assigned, neither are they intended to exclude other duties which may be logical assignments to this class.

Serves as department representative to the news media, releasing information through daily news bulletins on crimes and accidents, and answering questions concerning the work of the department. Sets up and coordinates all formal departmental news conferences.

Responds to major crimes, chemical spills, SWAT call-ups, and most major accidents where there has been a fatality or unusual occurrence to coordinate information about the incident and to answer questions for the press, city officials, or citizens.

Serves as official department representative at any required meetings in order to give reports, offer advice, make recommendations, and keep informed on local trends that may affect the police service. Makes speeches on police department matters before school or civic groups.

Promotes a positive public image of the work of the department in the daily performance of duties by demonstrating to the public the necessity and methods of civilian cooperation in law enforcement work. Coordinates the work of the department with related federal, state, and local agencies, releasing information and giving assistance when needed. Develops television or radio programs that promote the public image of the police department.

Advises the Chief of Police or other designated department officers of any situations that may affect the department's public image. Studies new laws, regulations, ordinances, and court rulings relating to police department operations to determine if changes in department policies and procedures are needed. Reads all police incident reports in order to have the information necessary to handle inquiries from the public or the press.

Writes reports as assigned by the Chief of Police to document activity in the areas of public information/public relations. Writes letters in reply to written or oral requests received by the police department or as needed to handle problems in the assigned areas. Writes newspaper articles or any other type of official department position paper for publication. Writes letters of commendation for department personnel.

Maintains a file of all news releases, media events, and related public relations activities.

Participates in the department's training program by serving as an instructor in the areas of public information, public relations, and public speaking.

Performs any related duties assigned.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, all requirements listed below must be met by the filing deadline for application for admission to the examination.

Must meet all requirements of the Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Law, including being a citizen of the United States, and of legal age.

After offer of employment, but before beginning work in this class, must pass a medical examination, the selection and administration of which shall be authorized by the Appointing Authority, designed to demonstrate good health and physical fitness sufficient to perform the essential duties of the position, with or without accommodation.

Must possess a valid driver's license.

Applicant must possess one of the following: high school diploma, high school equivalency certificate, high school transcript, affidavit from the issuing high school, associate's or bachelor's degree, or college transcript, any one of which must indicate that graduation has occurred or a degree awarded. A certification of completion shall not be sufficient to substitute for a diploma or equivalency certificate and must have at least five (5) years of full-time experience as a law enforcement officer. Two (2) years of experience as a police department public information/public relations officer may be substituted for the course work and the

law enforcement experience.

OR

Must have a bachelor's degree in communications or a related field (including speech, journalism, broadcast journalism, or a related curriculum), and must have at least two (2) years of full-time experience as a law enforcement officer. One (1) year of experience as a police department public information/public relations officer may be substituted for the law enforcement experience.

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